

137 and other trees. These are the sacred groves. Here the
 778 villagers worship *U ryngkew U basa*, the tutelary deity of
 the village. These groves are taboo, and it is an offence to cut
 [776] trees therein for any purpose other than for performing funeral
 361 obsequies. The groves are generally not more than a few
 137 hundred yards away from the villages. The villages of the
 Syntengs are similar in character to those of the Khasis. The
 245 Wár villages nestle on the hill-sides of the southern border, and
 are to be seen peeping out from the green foliage with which
 the southern slopes are clad. In the vicinity of, and actually
 up to the houses, in the Wár villages, are to be observed large
 groves of areca-nut, often twined with the *pan* creeper, and
 of plantain trees, which much enhance the beauty of the scene.
 Looking at a Wár village from a distance, a darker shade of
 green is seen; this denotes the limits of the extensive groves
 where the justly celebrated Khasi orange is grown, which is the
 361 source of so much profit to these people. The houses in the
 Wár villages are generally closer together than those of the
 Khasis, probably owing to space being limited, and to the
 villages being located on the slopes of hills. Generally up the
 [363] narrow village street, and from house to house, there are rough
 steep stone steps, the upper portion of a village being frequently
 situated at as high an elevation as 200 to 300 ft. above the
 lower. In a convenient spot in a Wár village a clear space is
 to be seen neatly swept and kept free from weeds, and sur-
 rounded with a stone wall, where the village tribunals sit, and
 the elders meet in solemn conclave. Dances also are held here
 778 on festive occasions. At Nongjri village there is a fine rubber
 796 tree, under whose hollow trunk there are certain sacred stones
 where the priest performs the village ceremonies.

361 The Bhoi and Lynngam villages are built in small clearings
 in the forest, the houses are close together and are built often
 [363] in parallel lines, a fairly broad space being reserved between
 [357] the lines of houses to serve as a street. One misses the pretty
 gardens of the Wár villages, for Bhois and Lynngams attempt
 nothing of the sort, probably because, unlike the Khasi, a Bhoi
 or Lynngam village never remains more than two or three years
 in one spot; generally the villages of these people are in the
 vicinity of the forest clearings, sometimes actually in the midst